



Advisory

Title: Homeland Security Advisory System Increased to ORANGE for Financial Institutions in Specific

Geographical Areas

Date: August 1, 2004



Based on this notification, the United States Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) level for the financial services sectors in New York City, Northern New Jersey, and Washington, DC, was raised from YELLOW – ELEVATED to ORANGE – HIGH on August 1, 2004. The threat level for the rest of the nation remains at YELLOW – ELEVATED.

This is a joint DHS and FBI Advisory.

DHS and the FBI encourage recipients of this Advisory to report information concerning suspicious or criminal activity potentially related to terrorism to their local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force – the regional phone numbers can be found online at <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm>, and the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC). The HSOC may be reached by phone at (202) 282-8101 or by email at HSCenter@dhs.gov.

OVERVIEW

The following information is meant to advise state and local officials and private sector owners and operators of critical facilities about indicators of terrorist attack planning. Our understanding of this threat could change as new information becomes available.

DETAILS

Recent credible and specific intelligence reporting indicates terrorist operatives have done extensive research and reconnaissance activity against major U.S. and international financial institutions in Washington, DC, Northern New Jersey and New York City. These include: the Citigroup buildings in the New York City area, the New York Stock Exchange Building in New York City, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Buildings in Washington DC, and the Prudential Insurance Company of America in Newark, New Jersey. The reporting provides a level of detail that is unusually specific, to include information about the interior configurations of these buildings, as well as infrastructure, services, and buildings that surround the targets of interest.

The reporting does not specify the timing or mode of attack. Based on the nature of the reconnaissance information, however, the most likely means of attack would be a Vehicular-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED), to include limousines, large vans, trucks, and oil tankers which could be placed in underground parking areas or near highly populated

entrance ways. A joint DHS/FBI Information Bulletin “Potential Threat to Homeland Using Heavy Transport Vehicles,” issued on 30 July 2004, outlines terrorist use of VBIEDs overseas as well as in the United States. Other possible modes of attack are the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in subways and other public transport systems in close proximity to these targets. Terrorist use of aircraft, including helicopters, as weapons against Homeland targets is another mode of attack to consider.

This information does make vague references to other potential targets, but such references are not unusual. Information about these other buildings consisted mostly of limited or generic references that contain nowhere near the level of details of the extensive casing and surveillance activities outlined in the intelligence of the other five previously mentioned buildings. There is no credible evidence to indicate that al-Qaida is targeting these other locations. We continue to review, analyze, and update this intelligence reporting.

SUGGESTED PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR PERSONNEL AT THE AFFECTED LOCATIONS:

For **personnel**, we recommend the following protective measures:

- Ensure that all levels of personnel are notified via briefings, email, voice mail and signage of any changes in threat conditions and protective measures.
- Encourage personnel to be alert and to immediately report any situation that appears to constitute a threat or suspicious activity.
- Encourage personnel to take notice and report suspicious packages, devices, unattended briefcases, or other unusual items or materials immediately; inform them not to handle or attempt to move any such object.
- Encourage personnel to keep their family members and supervisors apprised of their whereabouts.
- Encourage personnel to know the location of emergency exits, stairwells and rally points to ensure safe egress and marshalling of all employees in an emergency.

This Advisory has been redacted for posting on a public website. Information contained in the original product, which was provided for those that have a need to know in performing the official duties of their position, has been removed. For comments or questions relating to the content or dissemination of this Advisory, please contact the DHS Public Affairs Office at (202) 282-8000.